

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for evaluating and selecting competition winners from a pool of candidates in a competition comprising:
 - 5 a database for storing candidate documents;
 - a grouping subsystem coupled to said database for grouping said candidate documents into candidate data sets;
 - a qualification subsystem coupled to said database for determining said candidate data sets to be qualified or disqualified;
 - 10 a pool reduction subsystem coupled to said database for determining whether said candidate data sets having been qualified meet a discretionary eligibility standard, said discretionary eligibility standard varying as a function of the number of said candidate data sets having been qualified;
 - an evaluation subsystem coupled to said qualification subsystem and said
15 database for evaluating each of said candidate data sets having met said discretionary eligibility standard and scoring one or more evaluation variables in response to said evaluation; and
 - a selection subsystem coupled to said evaluation subsystem and database for selecting one or more competition finalists responsive to said evaluation and
20 scoring of said candidate data sets having met said discretionary eligibility standard.
2. A system as in claim 1 further comprising:
 - a document reception subsystem comprising:
 - a network interface module coupled to said database for receiving
electronic submissions, said database storing said electronic submissions as
25 candidate documents,
 - a scanner interface module for interfacing said system to a scanner and receiving scans of submitted hardcopy documents, and
 - a data extraction module coupled to said scanner interface module and said database for extracting data from said scans, said database storing said
30 extracted data as candidate documents.

3. A system as in claim 2, further comprising:

a duplicate checking module coupled to said network interface module,
said data extraction module and said database for determining whether said
candidate documents exist in said database, said candidate documents having been
5 determined not to exist in said database being stored in said database.

4. A system as in claim 1 wherein said qualification subsystem comprises:
a first filter module coupled to said database for determining whether
said candidate data sets meet a data completeness standard.

5. A system as in claim 4 wherein said data completeness standard requires
10 said candidate data sets to include a minimum set of document types.

6. A system as in claim 4 wherein said evaluation subsystem comprises:
an evaluation workstation coupled to said database for facilitating
evaluation of said candidate data sets having met said discretionary eligibility
standard, said evaluation workstation comprising:

15 a display for displaying information extracted from said candidate
data sets, and

an input device for entering information;

a matching module coupled to said database for selecting a possible
evaluator to evaluate one of said candidate data sets having met said discretionary
20 eligibility standard;

an evaluator eligibility module coupled to said database for determining
whether said evaluator is permitted to evaluate said one of said candidate data sets
having met said discretionary eligibility standard; and

25 an evaluation module coupled to said evaluator eligibility module, said
database, and said evaluation workstation for providing on said display information
extracted from said one of said candidate data sets having met said discretionary
eligibility standard, providing one or more evaluation variables for scoring, and

receiving a score for each of said one or more evaluation variables from said input device.

7. A system as in claim 1 wherein said selection system comprises:

5 a phase 1 selection module coupled to said evaluation subsystem for selecting a first set of candidate finalists responsive to total scores generated responsive to corresponding said received scores, said first set of candidate finalists not exceeding a predetermined total number; said phase 1 selection module further outputting when said first set of candidate data sets is less than said predetermined number a sub-pool of said candidate data sets all having received equal
10 corresponding said total scores; and

a phase 2 selection module coupled to said phase 1 selection module and said database for selecting a second set of candidate finalists, said second set of candidate finalists being a subset of said sub-pool, said first set of candidate finalists plus said second set of said candidate finalists equal in number to said predetermined
15 total number.

8. A system as in claim 7, said phase 1 selection module comprising:

a scoring module coupled to said evaluation subsystem and said database for generating said total scores;

20 a grouping module coupled to said scoring module and said database for grouping said candidate data sets into score tiers responsive to corresponding said total scores, each of said score tiers comprising one or more of said candidate data sets having equal said total scores;

a selection module coupled to said ranking module, said ranking workstation, and said database for selecting a first set of candidate finalists
25 responsive to said ranking, said first set of candidate finalists equal to or less than said predetermined total number; and

an output module for outputting said sub-pool, said sub-pool of candidate profiles comprising one of said score tiers, said one of said score tiers having the

highest total score of those of said score tiers containing candidate profiles not selected for said first set of candidate profiles.

9. A system as in claim 7, said phase 2 selection module comprising:
- a receiving submodule coupled to said for receiving said sub-pool of said candidate data sets from said phase 1 selection module;
 - an evaluation response selection submodule for determining one of said received scores to be weighted and a weight;
 - a weighting submodule coupled to said selection module and said evaluation response selection submodule for weighting said one of said received scores of said candidate data sets in said sub-pool;
 - a scoring submodule coupled to said weighting submodule for generating weighted scores for said candidate data sets in said sub-pool;
 - a grouping submodule coupled to said scoring submodule for grouping said candidate data sets in said sub-pool into sub-tiers responsive to corresponding weighted scores;
 - a selection submodule for selecting additional candidate finalists responsive to said weighted evaluation tier ranking; and
 - a stop submodule for determining when a correct number of candidate finalists have been selected and outputting said additional candidate finalists.
10. A system as in claim 1 wherein said selection system comprises:
- a scoring module for summing evaluation scores for each of said candidate data sets having been evaluated;
 - a score grouping module for grouping said candidate data sets having been evaluated into score tiers each comprising substantially similar corresponding ones of evaluation score sums;
 - a phase 1 selection module for selecting all said candidate data sets of the score tiers beginning with the score tier having the highest median evaluation score sum and proceeding to score tiers of successively lower median evaluation score sums such that the number of candidate documents selected is maximized without

exceeding a predetermined number, said phase 1 selection module further outputting an active group, said active group comprising the candidate data sets of the score tier having the highest median evaluation score sum containing no candidates having been selected; and

5 a phase 2 selection module for selecting a subset of said active group.

11. A system as in claim 10 wherein said phase 2 selection system comprises:

a weighting module for weighting said evaluation scores for each of said candidate data sets in said active group;

10 a summing module for summing said weighted evaluation scores for each of said candidate data sets in said active group;

a score grouping module for grouping said candidate data sets in said active group into phase 2 score tiers by substantially similar corresponding said evaluation score sums;

15 a tie-breaking selection module for selecting all candidate documents within the phase 2 score tiers beginning with the phase 2 score tier having the highest median evaluation score sum and proceeding to phase 2 score tiers of successively lower median evaluation score sums such that the total number of selected said candidate data sets is maximized without exceeding said predetermined
20 number; and

a designating module for designating the candidate data sets of the phase 2 score tier having the highest median evaluation score sum containing no candidates having been selected as the active group.

12. A system as in claim 1 further comprising:

25 a monitoring subsystem coupled to said evaluation subsystem for monitoring evaluations of qualified said candidate data sets, said monitoring subsystem allowing interaction with an ongoing evaluation, said monitoring subsystem allowing nullification of an evaluation when said evaluation is determined to be inconsistent with the requirements of said competition.

13. A system as in claim 1 further comprising:
a confirmation subsystem coupled to said selection subsystem and said database for determining the confirmation status of said one or more competition finalists and determining one or more competition winners responsive to said confirmation status determination.
14. A system as in claim 13 wherein said confirmation subsystem comprises:
a workstation comprising:
a display for displaying candidate packages and corresponding confirmation documents, and
an input device for entering information;
a confirmation document request module coupled to said database for requesting confirmation documents;
a confirmation module coupled to said workstation and said database for providing said candidate packages and said corresponding confirmation documents to said workstation for display and for receiving confirmation responses; and
a conversion module coupled to said workstation and said database for marking ones of said candidate data sets as non-selected responsive to a corresponding confirmation response indicating nonconfirmation and for marking ones of candidate data sets as competition winners responsive to a corresponding confirmation response indicating confirmation.
15. A system as in claim 1 further comprising:
a competition winner tracking subsystem coupled to said database for tracking said competition winners comprising:
a competition winner tracking module coupled to said database for determining when update documents are required for a competition winner,
an update document request module coupled to said competition-winner module for coordinating update document request correspondence, and
an update module coupled to said database for updating confirmation winner packages with said required update documents.

16. A system as in claim 15, wherein said competition winner tracking subsystem further comprises:

a workstation comprising:

5 a display for displaying information from one of said candidate data sets and corresponding confirmation documents, and

an input device for entering information; and

10 a reconfirmation module coupled to workstation and said database for displaying the candidate data sets of said competition winners with corresponding said required documents and receiving reconfirmation responses, the status of the candidate data sets of said competition winners being updated in response to said reconfirmation responses.

17. A system for evaluating and selecting competition winners from a pool of candidates in a competition comprising:

a document reception module for receiving document submissions;

15 a database for storing candidate records;

a duplicate detection module coupled to said document reception module and said database for determining whether any of said document submissions duplicate any of said candidate records, said duplicate detection module storing said submissions determined not to be duplicates of any of said candidate records in said database;

20 a qualification subsystem coupled to said database for determining said candidate records to be qualified or disqualified;

an evaluation subsystem coupled to said qualification subsystem and said database for evaluating and scoring each of said candidate records having been qualified over one or more evaluation variables; and

25 a selection subsystem coupled to said evaluation subsystem and database for selecting one or more competition finalists responsive to said evaluation and scoring of said candidate records having been qualified.

18. A system as in claim 17, wherein said candidate records include at least one applicant form, at least one nominator form, and at least one recommender form, said system further comprising:

5 a grouping module for grouping said candidate records into candidate packages, said candidate packages comprising all of said candidate records relating to the same candidate; and

wherein said qualification system determines those of said candidate packages that do not have a corresponding said applicant form, said nominator form, and said recommender form as disqualified.

10 19. A system for evaluating and selecting competition winners from a pool of candidates in a competition comprising:

a database for storing candidate records and images of scanned documents, said images being additionally represented by corresponding ones of said candidate records containing data derived from said images;

15 a qualification subsystem coupled to said database for determining said candidate records to be qualified or disqualified;

a display;

20 an evaluation subsystem coupled to said qualification subsystem, said database, and said display for evaluating and scoring each of said candidate records having been qualified over one or more evaluation variables, said evaluation subsystem facilitating presentation on said display of information from said candidate records having been qualified and corresponding said images during evaluation of said candidate records having been qualified; and

25 a selection subsystem coupled to said evaluation subsystem and database for selecting one or more competition finalists responsive to said scoring of said candidate records having been qualified.

20. A method as in 19 wherein said one or more evaluation variables are displayed in a first display area of said display and at least a portion of one of said

images and said candidate records is displayed in a second display area of said display.

21. A system for evaluating and selecting competition winners from a pool of candidates in a competition comprising:

- 5 a database for storing candidate records;
- a qualification subsystem coupled to said database for determining said candidate records to be qualified or disqualified;
- a grouping subsystem coupled to said database for grouping said candidate records into evaluation groups responsive to information contained in said candidate records;
- 10 an evaluation subsystem coupled to said qualification subsystem and said database for evaluating and scoring each of said candidate records having been qualified over one or more evaluation variables; and
- a selection subsystem coupled to said evaluation subsystem and database
- 15 for selecting one or more competition finalists for each of said evaluation groups responsive to said evaluation and scoring of said candidate records having been qualified.

22. A system as in claim 21, further comprising:

- an eligibility subsystem coupled to said database for determining said
- 20 competition records to be eligible or ineligible responsive to a minimum eligibility standard and information contained in said competition records, each of said evaluation groups having a corresponding said minimum eligibility standard.

23. A system as in claim 22, wherein said minimum eligibility standard varies with the number of candidate profiles.

25 24. A system for selecting one or more candidates from a plurality of candidate profiles comprising:

- a storage adapted to store a plurality of candidate profiles;

an eligibility unit coupled to said storage adapted to determine said candidate profiles to be eligible or ineligible;

an evaluation unit coupled to said storage adapted to facilitate evaluation of said candidate profiles by the scoring of one or more variables by one or more
5 evaluators;

a first selection unit coupled to said storage adapted to receive said variables having been scored, said first selection unit further adapted to select a subset of said candidate profiles responsive to said variables having been scored, said subset of said candidate profiles not exceeding a predetermined value in
10 number; and

a second selection unit coupled to said first selection unit and said storage adapted to receive a sub-pool of said candidate profiles and adapted to output a subset of said sub-pool of candidate profiles responsive to application of predetermined variable weights to said variables having been scored, said subset of
15 said candidate profiles added to said subset of said sub-pool of candidate profiles equaling said predetermined value in number.

25. A method as in claim 24, said first selection unit comprising:

a scoring module coupled to said storage adapted to generate total scores for said candidate profiles responsive to said variables;

a grouping module coupled to said scoring module and said storage for
20 grouping said candidate profiles into score tiers responsive to corresponding said total scores, each said score tiers comprising one or more said candidate profiles having equal said total scores;

a selection module coupled to said grouping module and said storage for
25 selecting a first set of candidate profiles responsive to said grouping, said first set of candidate profiles equal to or less than said predetermined total number, said candidate profiles in said first set of candidate profiles having corresponding said total scores higher than said total scores of any said candidate profiles not in said first set of candidate profiles; and

an output module for outputting said sub-pool of candidate profiles, said sub-pool of said candidate profiles comprising one of said score tiers, said one of said score tiers having the highest total score of those of said score tiers containing candidate profiles not selected for said first set of candidate profiles.

- 5 26. A method as in claim 24, said second selection unit comprising:
 a receiving module coupled to said for receiving said sub-pool of said
candidate profiles from said phase 1 selection module;
 an evaluation response selection submodule for determining one of said
one or more evaluation responses to be weighted and a weight,
10 a weighting module coupled to said selection module and said evaluation
response selection submodule for weighting said one of said evaluation responses of
candidate data sets in said sub-pool,
 a scoring module coupled to said weighting module for generating
weighted scores for said candidate profiles in said sub-pool;
15 a grouping module coupled to said scoring module for grouping said
candidate profiles in said sub-pool into sub-tiers responsive to corresponding
weighted scores,
 a selection module for selecting additional candidate profiles responsive
to said weighted evaluation tier ranking, and
20 a stop module for determining when a correct number of candidate
profiles have been selected and outputting said additional candidate profiles.

27. A method for administering a competition system comprising:
 receiving one or more candidate packages, each said candidate package
containing information about a candidate in a competition;
25 for each said candidate package:
 determining whether said candidate package meets a minimum
application standard,
 selecting said candidate package when said candidate package is
determined to meet said minimum application standard,

selecting an evaluator,
enabling said evaluator to evaluate said selected candidate package,
and
receiving an evaluation of said selected candidate package from said
5 evaluator;
ranking all said evaluated candidate packages responsive to
corresponding received said evaluations; and
selecting a predetermined number of competition finalists responsive to
said calculated overall scores.

- 10 28. The method of claim 27 wherein said step of selecting an evaluator
comprises:
choosing an evaluator;
determining whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said selected
candidate package;
15 choosing another evaluator and returning to said step of determining
whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said selected candidate package
responsive to said determination of whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said
selected candidate package indicating said evaluator is not eligible to evaluate said
selected candidate package; and
20 selecting said evaluator responsive to said determination indicating said
evaluator is eligible to evaluate said selected candidate package.

29. The method as in claim 28 wherein the step of determining whether said
evaluator is eligible to evaluate said candidate package comprises:
sending an evaluator eligibility question to said evaluator;
25 receiving a response to said evaluator eligibility question from said
evaluator; and
determining whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said queued
candidate package responsive to said received response regarding said evaluator
eligibility question.

30. The method as in claim 27, wherein said step of receiving a plurality of candidate packages, each said candidate package containing information about a candidate in a competition comprises:

receiving a plurality of application documents each relating to a
5 candidate; and
grouping said application documents such that all said application documents relating to the same candidate are grouped into a candidate package.

31. The method of claim 27, said method further comprising:
determining whether said selected candidate package is eligible to be
10 evaluated; and
denying said evaluator from evaluating said selected candidate package responsive to said determination indicating said selected candidate package is not eligible to be evaluated.

32. The method as in claim 27 wherein the step of determining whether said
15 candidate package is eligible to be evaluated comprises:
sending a candidate package eligibility question to said evaluator;
receiving a response from said evaluator regarding said candidate package eligibility question; and
determining whether said candidate package is eligible for evaluation
20 responsive to said received response regarding said candidate package eligibility question.

33. A method as in claim 27 wherein said one or more minimum application standards comprises:
one or more minimum response standards;
25 one or more eligibility requirements; and
one or more qualification requirements.

34. A method as in claim 27 further comprising:

determining whether any of said competition finalists are confirmed; and
selecting a new competition finalist for each competition finalist
determined not to be confirmed and returning to said step of determining whether
any of said competition finalists are confirmed.

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35. A method for selecting one or more candidates from a plurality of
candidate applications in a competition system, comprising:

determining for each of said candidate applications whether said
candidate application meets minimum qualification standards;

10 determining the number of said candidate applications meeting said
minimum qualification standards;

determining for each said candidate application meeting said minimum
qualification standards whether said candidate application meets a discretionary
qualification standard, said discretionary qualification standard being a function of
15 said determined number of said candidate applications meeting said minimum
qualification standards;

evaluating each said candidate application determined to meet said
minimum qualification standards;

20 scoring each of said candidate applications that has been evaluated over a
set of evaluation variables; and

selecting one or more of said candidates as competition finalists
responsive to said scoring.

36. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of determining for each said candidate application whether said candidate application meets minimum qualification standards comprises:

5 i) filtering each candidate's candidate information to determine whether said candidate's candidate information meets at least one of an information completeness standard and a document completeness standard;

ii) filtering said candidate information to ensure said candidate information indicates said candidate meets one or more minimum qualification requirements;

10 iii) grouping said candidate information into two or more groups responsive to one or more predetermined pieces of information contained in said candidate information; and

iv) filtering said candidate information to ensure said candidate information indicates said candidate meets one or more group level standards.

15 37. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of filtering said candidate information to ensure said candidate information indicates said candidate meets one or more minimum qualification requirements comprises requiring each said candidate's candidate information includes at least a candidate application, a nomination form, and a recommendation form.

20 38. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of filtering said candidate information to ensure said candidate information indicates said candidate meets one or more group level standards comprises passing said candidate when said candidate information meets or exceeds at least one of a minimum GPA score, a family income requirement, and completion of a GED.

25 39. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of grouping comprises grouping said candidates by one or more of the following candidate information:

geographical residence, urban/rural upbringing, primary ethnicity, and cultural background.

40. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of filtering said candidate information to ensure said candidate information indicates said candidate meets one or more group level standards comprises passing said candidate when said candidate information indicates said candidate meets or exceeds a third filter set, said third filter set comprising at least one of a minimum number of academic awards, a minimum number of public awards, a minimum number of honors, a minimum number of leadership roles, a minimum number of student excel bubbles completed, a minimum class rigor average, a minimum amount of community service, a maximum amount of personal circumstance exceptions, and a minimum number of paid hours of employment.

41. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of evaluating comprises the steps of:
matching each said candidate information with a reader qualified to read said candidate information, a reader being disqualified from reading a particular candidate's candidate information when any conflicts exist; and
reading each said candidate information by said reader, said step of reading comprising scoring said candidate information on a set of reading variables.

42. A method as in claim 41 wherein said set of reading variables includes the following non-cognitive variables: positive self-concept, realistic self-appraisal, understanding/navigation of a social system, preference of long-term goals over short-term goals, availability of a strong support person, leadership experience, community service, interest/knowledge in a non-school field.

43. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of selecting comprises the steps of:

summing said evaluation variable scores for each of said candidate applications to produce a total reading variable score;

ranking said candidate applications by their respective total reading variable score;

5 determining the highest score tier having ones of said candidate applications not already selected;

 determining whether the sum of all said candidate applications already selected plus the number of said candidate applications at the current score tier exceeds the total number of said candidate applications to be selected;

10 when the sum of all said candidate applications already selected plus the number of said candidate applications at the current score tier is less than the total number of said candidate applications to be selected, selecting the candidate applications in the current score tier and continuing back to said step of determining the highest score tier;

15 when the sum of all said candidate applications already selected plus the number of said candidate applications at the current score tier equals the total number of said candidate applications to be selected, selecting the candidate applications at the current score tier and aborting any further selection;

 when the sum of all said candidate applications already selected plus the number of said candidate applications at the current score tier exceeds the total number of said candidate applications to be selected, carrying out the steps of:

 determining the next highest score tier having one or more said candidate applications not already selected,

 selecting one of said set of evaluation variables;

25 altering the weight of said selected evaluation variable over all unselected said candidate applications in the score tier determined to be the next highest to produce weighted sets of reading scores,

 summing each said candidate applications weighted evaluation variable scores to produce a total evaluation variable score;

30 grouping said candidate applications by their respective total weighted reading variable scores;

beginning with the highest ranking total weighted reading variable score group and continuing successively to the next lower total weighted reading variable score group, selecting the candidate applications of as many total weighted evaluation variable score groups as possible without exceeding the total number of said candidate applications to be selected, and

selecting a previously-unselected evaluation variable from said set of evaluation variables and returning to said step of altering the weight of said selected evaluation variable and continuing.

44. A method as in claim 35 wherein said step of confirming comprises requiring each said candidate's candidate information to include a specification of citizenship or primary residency, a tribal document when said candidate is American Indian, information regarding community service, information regarding employment, information regarding honors and awards, and information regarding leadership experience.

45. A method of selecting a predetermined number winners from a pool of candidates in a competition system, said candidates having associated variable scores for two or more variables, said method comprising:

summing the variable scores for each said candidate to produce variable score sums;

grouping said candidates into groups, each of said groups defining candidates having a predetermined one of said variable score sums;

determining a predetermined number of winners;

determining whether said predetermined number of winners exceeds or equals the number of candidates in the group having the highest one of said variable score sums;

if said predetermined number of winners exceeds or equals the number of candidates in the group having the highest said variable score sums, selecting all candidates in said group having the highest one of said variable score sums;

determining whether said predetermined number of winners exceeds or equals the number of candidates already selected plus the candidates in the group having the next highest one of said variable score sums;

5 if said predetermined number of winners exceeds or equals the number of candidates already selected plus the candidates in the group having the next highest one of said variable score sums, selecting all candidates in said group having the next highest one of said variable score sums, otherwise, designating all candidates in the group having the highest one of said variable score sums containing candidates not selected as the active pool and continuing to the step of initializing the weight of
10 all variables;

determining whether the number of selected candidates equals the predetermined number of winners;

15 stopping when said determination of whether the number of selected candidates equals the predetermined number of winners indicates the number of selected candidates equals the predetermined number of winners;

designating all candidates in the next highest score group containing candidates not selected as the active pool;

initializing the weight of all variables;

20 selecting a variable to be weighted, said variable having a weight which has not been changed since said initialization of the weight of all variables;

weighting the variable scores for all candidates in the second-tier candidate pool by multiplying each of the variable scores of said candidates in said second-tier candidate pool by a corresponding one of said variable weights;

25 summing the weighted variable scores for each candidate in the second-tier candidate pool;

ranking the candidates in the second-tier candidate pool from highest weighted variable score sum to lowest weighted variable score sum;

subgrouping said candidates in the second-tier candidate pool such that each subgroup comprises candidates having the same weighted variable score sum;

30 selecting all candidates in each subgroup beginning with the subgroup having the highest weighted variable score and proceeding to subgroups with

successively lower weighted variable scores such that the total number of candidates selected in said step (e) plus the total number of candidates selected in this step is maximized without exceeding the predetermined number of winners;

5 determining whether the number of selected candidates equals the predetermined number of winners;

stopping when said determination of whether the number of selected candidates equals the predetermined number of winners indicates the number of selected candidates equals the predetermined number of winners;

10 designating all candidates in the highest variable score sum candidate subgroup having candidates not selected as the active pool; and
returning to said step of selecting a variable to be weighted.

46. A method for administering a competition system comprising:
receiving an application containing information about a candidate in a competition;

15 determining whether said application meets a minimum application standard;

retaining said application responsive to said determination of whether said application meets said minimum application standard indicating said application meets said minimum application standard;

20 reading from said application a predetermined piece of information;
determining whether said application meets a discretionary application standard, said discretionary application standard being a function of said piece of information;

25 retaining said application responsive to said determination of whether said application meets said discretionary application standard indicating said application meets said discretionary application standard;

selecting an evaluator;

determining whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said application;

enabling said evaluator to evaluate said application responsive to said
determination indicating said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said application;
receiving an evaluation of said application from said evaluator;
calculating an overall score for said application responsive to said
5 evaluation;

determining a ranking of said overall score of said application relative to
the overall scores of a pool of evaluated applications; and

selecting said application as a competition winner responsive to said
determination of said ranking of said overall score of said application relative to the
10 overall scores of said pool of evaluated applications indicating said application
meets a competition winner ranking standard.

47. The method as in claim 46 further comprising:

denying said evaluator from evaluating said candidate package
responsive to said determination indicating said evaluator is not eligible to evaluate
15 said selected candidate package.

48. A method for administering academic admissions comprising:

receiving applications from one or more applicants;
determining which of said applications meet minimum application
standards;
20 retaining those of said applications which are determined to meet said
minimum application standards;

reading from said applications a piece of information;
determining which of said applications meet discretionary application
standard, said discretionary application standard being a function of said piece of
25 information;

retaining those of said applications which are determined to meet said
minimum application standard;

receiving a request from an evaluator to evaluate a retained application;

determining whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said retained application;

denying said evaluator from evaluating said retained application responsive to said determination indicating said evaluator is not eligible to evaluate said retained application;

determining whether said retained application is eligible for evaluation; denying said evaluator from evaluating said retained application responsive to said determination indicating said retained application is not eligible to be evaluated;

enabling said evaluator to evaluate said retained application; receiving a response from said evaluator; determining which of said retained applications have been successfully evaluated;

producing an overall score for each said retained application which was successfully evaluated; and

selecting a predetermined number of said retained application finalists responsive to said overall scores.

49. A competition system user interface comprising:
a data region for displaying information for evaluation by a user; and
a evaluation region coupled to said data region adapted to prompt a user with at least one evaluation inquiries, each of said evaluation inquiries causing said displayed information to be adjusted so that a subset of said information corresponding to an evaluation inquiry is displayed responsive to said evaluation inquiry being selected, said evaluation region further adapted to receive an evaluation response.

50. A competition system user interface as in claim 49 further comprising:
a control region coupled to said data region for providing a user with at least one information source controls, each of said information source controls causing said data region to display information extracted from a corresponding source

responsive to said information control being selected, said extracted information being adjusted so that a subset of said extracted information corresponding to the last selected of said evaluation inquiries.

51. A method for presenting a user interface to a user in a competition system comprising:
- 5 providing two or more source access means;
- receiving a response from one of said source access means;
- providing information extracted from a source corresponding to said one of said source access means responsive to said received response;
- 10 providing two or more evaluation prompts;
- receiving a response indicating selection of one of said evaluation prompts;
- providing a specific information from said source, said specific information corresponding to said selected evaluation prompt; and
- receiving an evaluation response to said selected evaluation prompt.
- 15 52. A method of preventing the accumulation of duplicate documents in a memory of a competition system comprising:
- a) determining the document type of a received document;
- b) extracting one or more pieces of data from said received document;
- c) determining whether a matching document exists in said memory having
- 20 said determined document type and containing said one or more pieces of data;
- d) determining whether said received document is more complete than said matching document when said second determination indicates said matching document exists;
- e) documenting said matching document as duplicate when said second
- 25 determination indicates said matching document exists and said third determination indicates said received document is more complete;
- f) storing said received document in said memory; and

g) documenting said stored received document as duplicate when said second determination indicates said matching document exists and said third determination indicates said matching document is more complete.

53. A method as in claim 52 further comprising:

5 h) determining whether any documents exist in said memory containing the same information in one or more predetermined fields as said stored received document and containing a difference candidate social security number than said stored received document; and

10 i) flagging said stored received document and any documents determined in said step (h) as potential fraud documents when at least one document results from said forth determination of said step (h).

54. A method of reducing the number of candidates in a candidate pool of a competition system, each candidate being represented in said competition system by a corresponding candidate information package, said method comprising:

15 determining whether each candidate information package in said candidate pool meets an information completeness standard and a document completeness standard;

20 removing all candidate information packages from said candidate pool which do not meet said information completeness standard and said document completeness standard;

determining whether each said candidate information package in said candidate pool indicates the corresponding candidate meets one or more minimum qualification standards;

25 removing all candidate information packages from said candidate pool which do not indicate the corresponding candidate meets said minimum qualification standards;

grouping said candidate information packages in said candidate pool into one or more groups based on information contained in said candidate information packages;

determining whether said candidate information packages in said candidate pool indicate the corresponding candidate meets one or more discretionary standards; and

5 removing all candidate information packages from said candidate pool which do not indicate the corresponding candidate meets said one or more discretionary standards.

55. A method as in claim 54 wherein said step of determining whether each candidate information package in said candidate pool meets an information completeness standard and a document completeness standard comprises
10 determining whether each said candidate information package includes at least a candidate application, a nomination form, and a recommendation form.

56. A method as in claim 54 wherein said step of determining whether each said candidate information package in said candidate pool indicates the corresponding candidate meets one or more minimum qualification standards comprises passing
15 said candidate when said candidate information meets or exceeds at least one of a minimum GPA score, a family income requirement, and completion of a GED.

57. A method as in claim 54 wherein said step of grouping comprises grouping said candidates by one or more of geographical residence, urban/rural upbringing, primary ethnicity, and cultural background.

20 58. A method as in claim 54 wherein said step of determining whether said candidate information packages in said candidate pool indicate the corresponding candidate meets one or more discretionary standards comprises determining whether said candidate information indicates said candidate meets or exceeds a third filter set, said third filter set comprising at least one of a minimum number of academic
25 awards, a minimum number of public awards, a minimum number of honors, a minimum number of leadership roles, a minimum number of student excel bubbles completed, a minimum class rigor average, a minimum amount of community

service, a maximum amount of personal circumstance exceptions, and a minimum number of paid hours of employment.

59. A method as in claim 54 wherein said step of determining whether said candidate information packages in said candidate pool indicate the corresponding candidate meets one or more discretionary standards comprises determining whether said candidate information indicates said candidate meets or exceeds a minimum number of academic awards, a minimum number of public awards, a minimum number of honors, a minimum number of leadership roles, a minimum number of student excel bubbles completed, a minimum class rigor average, a minimum amount of community service, a maximum amount of personal circumstance exceptions, and a minimum number of paid hours of employment.

60. A method of reducing the number of individuals within a pool of candidates, each said candidate being represented by an application, said method comprising:
for each of said applications:
15 reading information from said application;
retrieving, as a function of said information, selection criteria to apply to said application;
analyzing said application with said selection criteria; and
determining whether said application meets of said selection criteria;
20 and
discarding said application when said determination indicates said application does not meet said selection criteria.

61. A method of reducing the number of individuals within a pool of candidates, each said candidate being represented by an application, said method comprising:
25 determining from said applications a parameter;
determining selection criteria as a function of said parameter;
determining for each said applications whether said application meets said selection criteria; and

disqualifying all said applications determined not to meet said selection criteria.

62. A method of matching a candidate in a competition system to an evaluator, said candidate being represented by an application, said competition system having two or more evaluators, said method comprising:
- extracting a first datum from an application;
 - determining a classification for said application responsive to said datum;
 - selecting, from a plurality of evaluators preclassified as able to evaluate applications having said determined classification, one evaluator;
 - providing said one evaluator with a second datum from said application;
 - receiving a response from said one evaluator indicating whether said one evaluator is able to evaluate said application;
 - enabling said evaluator to evaluate said application responsive to said received response.
63. A method of training evaluators for a competition system comprising:
- determining a number of evaluators needed;
 - receiving a plurality of evaluator applications from evaluator candidates;
 - evaluation of the qualification of said evaluator candidates;
 - selection of a set of evaluator trainees;
 - instructing said set of evaluator trainees with the overall nature and goals of said competition system;
 - instructing said set of evaluator trainees with an evaluation rubric;
 - administering paper-based evaluation exercises to said set of evaluator trainees;
 - monitoring and providing constructive advice during said first administration;
 - administering electronic-based evaluation exercises to said set of evaluator trainees, said second administration substantially mimicking an actual evaluation situation;

subjecting said set of evaluator trainees to an evaluation;
selecting those said evaluator trainees passing said evaluation.

64. A method of evaluating candidates from a pool of candidates comprising:
selecting a candidate package to evaluate;
5 matching said candidate package to an evaluator who has not previously
evaluated or been determined ineligible to evaluate said candidate package;
receiving an access request from said evaluator to evaluate said candidate
package;
providing a first set of information from said candidate package and a set of
10 evaluator eligibility questions to said evaluator based on said candidate package;
receiving a response to said evaluator eligibility questions;
determining from said response to said evaluator eligibility questions
whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said candidate package;
denying said evaluator from evaluating said candidate package when the
15 result of said first determination is that said evaluator is ineligible to evaluate said
candidate package;
presenting a second set of information from said candidate package and a set
of candidate eligibility questions to said evaluator;
receiving a response to said candidate eligibility questions from said
20 evaluator;
determining from said response to said candidate eligibility questions
whether said candidate package is eligible for evaluation;
denying said candidate package from being evaluated when said second
determination indicates said candidate package is ineligible from being evaluated;
25 presenting a second set of information from said candidate package, a set of
evaluation questions, and a rubric to said evaluator; and
receiving responses to said evaluation questions.

65. A method for evaluation of candidates in a competition system, each of said
candidates being represented by a candidate package, said method comprising:

receiving an evaluator eligibility question;
answering said evaluator eligibility question;
receiving an evaluation query and a first information from a candidate
package relating to said evaluation query, said first information including one of text
5 and an image;
receiving a data control;
selecting said data control;
receiving a second information from said candidate package relating to said
evaluation query, said second information including one of said text and said image
10 not provided in said first information; and
providing a response to said evaluation query.

66. A method as in claim 65, said method further including the steps of:
receiving a candidate eligibility question; and
responding to said candidate eligibility question.

15 67. A method of monitoring the evaluation of individuals in a pool of candidates
in a competition system comprising:
receiving data from an evaluation;
determining from said data an evaluation index;
comparing said evaluation index to corresponding reference indicies; and
20 determining whether said evaluation is aberrant responsive to said
comparison.

68. A method as in claim 65, wherein said evaluation index comprises one or
more evaluation responses and said corresponding reference indicies comprise one
or more of: the average corresponding evaluation responses of said evaluator for the
25 corresponding evaluation responses over two or more prior completed evaluations
and the average corresponding evaluation responses for one or more other evaluators
in said competition system over two or more prior completed evaluations.

69. A method as in claim 67, wherein said evaluation index comprises the number of reference sources checked per evaluation response and said corresponding reference indices comprise a minimum number of sources to be checked per evaluation response.

5 70. A method as in claim 67, wherein said evaluation index comprises the average time between responses in said evaluation and said corresponding reference indices comprise one or more of: the average corresponding average time between responses of said evaluator over two or more prior completed evaluations and the average corresponding average time between responses for one or more other
10 evaluators in said competition system over two or more prior completed evaluations.

71. A system for monitoring the evaluation of individuals in a pool of candidates in a competition system comprising:

a display;
an interface device coupled allowing a user to interact with said display, said
15 display and said interface unit;
receive means for electronically receiving evaluation responses, said evaluation responses being produced by an evaluator in evaluating a candidate package;
processing means to produce one or more evaluation indices from said
20 received evaluation responses; and
communication means for pausing said evaluation and interacting with said evaluator.

72. A method of ensuring fair and consistent evaluation comprising:
25 providing an evaluation workstation for use by an evaluator;
making available candidate applications from one or more candidates needing evaluation;
matching said evaluator to one or more of said candidate applications;

receiving a request from said evaluator to evaluate one of said one or more candidate applications;

providing one or more eligibility questions to said evaluator;

receiving responses to said eligibility questions;

5 determining from said responses to said eligibility questions whether said evaluator is eligible to evaluate said one candidate application;

preventing said evaluator from evaluating said candidate application responsive to said first determination indicating said evaluator is not eligible to evaluate said candidate application;

10 providing one or more candidate eligibility questions to said evaluator;

receiving responses to said candidate eligibility questions;

determining from said responses to said candidate eligibility questions whether said candidate is eligible to be evaluated;

15 preventing said evaluator from evaluating said candidate application responsive to said second determination indicating said candidate is not eligible to be evaluated;

presenting in a substantially simultaneous manner, said candidate application, an evaluation rubric, and a scoring display to said evaluator;

monitoring the evaluation of said candidate package by said evaluator; and

20 interacting with said evaluation responsive to the determination that said evaluation is unfair or inconsistent.

73. A method as in claim 72 wherein said step of monitoring includes at least one of detecting whether the average time between question responses is less than a minimum time period, determination whether the average time between question
25 responses is less than the average time period between question responses for said evaluator during past evaluations, determining whether the average evaluation score is above a maximum score, determining whether the average evaluation score is below a minimum score, and determination whether any evaluation score is inconsistent with information in said candidate application.

74. A method as in claim 72 wherein said step of interacting comprises at least one of terminating said evaluation, initiating a conversation with said evaluator, and providing an automated message to said evaluator.

5 75. A method of tie-breaking in a competition system containing two or more candidates, each said candidate being represented by an application, each said application having been scored with respect to two or more reading variables, said method comprising:

determining a total number of candidates to be selected;

10 summing each candidate's reading variable scores to produce a total reading variable score;

grouping said candidates into score tiers by their respective total reading variable scores;

15 determining the score tier having the highest total reading variable score with candidates not already selected;

determining whether the sum of all candidates already selected plus the number of candidates in said determined score tier exceeds the total number of candidates to be selected;

20 when the sum of all candidates already selected plus the number of candidates at the current score tier is less than the total number of candidates to be selected, selecting the candidates at said determined score tier and continuing back to said step of determining the highest score tier having candidates not already selected and continuing;

25 when the sum of all candidates already selected plus the number of candidates at the determined score tier equals the total number of candidates to be selected, selecting the candidates at the determined score tier and exiting said method; and

30 when the sum of all candidates already selected plus the number of candidates in the determined score tier exceeds the total number of candidates to be selected, carrying out the steps of:

ascertaining the highest score tier having candidates not already selected,

selecting one of said reading variable scores not previously selected;

altering the weight of said selected reading variable score for all

5 unselected candidates in said ascertained highest score tier,

summing all weighted reading variable scores and all unweighted reading variable scores for each candidate in said ascertained highest score tier to produce a corresponding total reading variable score;

10 grouping said candidates by their respective total weighted reading variable scores into score tiers;

beginning with the score tier having the highest total weighted reading variable score and continuing successively to the next lower score tier by total weighted reading variable score, selecting all candidates in all score tiers without exceeding the total number of candidates to be selected,

15 when the sum of all candidates already selected equals the total number of candidates to be selected, exiting said method, and

otherwise, designating the score tier having the highest total weighted reading variable score with unselected candidates and returning to said step of selecting one of said reading variable scores not previously selected and continuing.

20 76. A method of tracking the progress of a competition winner of a competition comprising:

determining one or more dates when progress documents are to be requested;

requesting on the first occurring of said one or more dates corresponding ones of said progress documents;

25 determining whether said requested progress documents have been received;

disqualifying said competition-winner and stopping when said determination indicates said requested progress documents have not all been received;

evaluating said requested progress documents;

30 determining whether said competition winner is requalified responsive to said requested progress document evaluation;

disqualifying said competition winner and stopping when said requalification determination indicates said competition winner is not requalified;

requesting on the next occurring of said one or more dates corresponding ones of said progress documents; and

5 returning to said step of determining whether said requested progress documents have been received.

77. A method of managing payment of academic scholarship awards to an academic scholarship winner, said method comprising:

10 determining one or more dates when re-qualification documents are to be requested;

requesting a requalification document on the first occurring of said one or more dates;

determining whether said requested requalification document has been received;

15 disqualifying said competition-winner and stopping when said determination of whether said requested requalification document has been received indicates said requested requalification document has not been received;

evaluating said requested requalification document;

20 determining whether said competition winner is requalified responsive to said requested requalification document evaluation;

disqualifying said competition winner and stopping when said determination of whether said competition winner is requalified indicates said competition winner is not requalified;

25 requesting another requalification document on the next occurring of said one or more dates; and

returning to said step of determining whether said requested requalification document has been received.

78. A method as in claim 77, wherein said requalification document comprises a transcript.

79. A method as in claim 77, wherein said requalification document comprises a tuition invoice.

5 80. A method as in claim 77, said method further comprising:
issuing payment to said academic scholarship winner when said
determination of whether said competition winner is requalified indicates said
competition winner is not requalified.

10 81. A method for documenting the selection of individuals from a pool of
candidates in a competition system to combat allegations of bias, said candidates
being represented by one or more application documents, said method comprising:
determining, prior to reception of any application documents, two or more
categories to group individuals to promote fairness of evaluation, a minimum
application completeness standard and a minimum application eligibility standard, a
15 minimum set of evaluation variables, a selection process, and a priority ordering and
weighting of said set of evaluation variables.

generating one or more dated documents documenting said determinations,
each said dated document being executed by personnel authorized by said
competition system.

20 receiving a plurality of application documents;
scanning in any application documents submitted in hardcopy form;
storing all scanned application documents in an image file;
applying said minimum application completeness standard to said received
application documents;
25 applying said minimum eligibility standard to said application documents
which passed said application of said minimum application completeness standard;

evaluating said application documents which passed said application of said minimum eligibility standard; and

selecting one or more individuals from said evaluated application documents using said selection process.

- 5 82. A method of simultaneously promoting two or more localized sets of selection criteria during selection of individuals from a pool of candidates in a competition system, each of said candidates being represented by an application, said method comprising:

10 grouping said individuals into two or more groups responsive to one or more pieces of data in said applications;

 evaluating said applications with respect to a set of criteria;

 scoring said applications with respect to two or more global variables;

15 applying a weight to one of said global variables, at least one of said weight and which of said two or more global variables to have said weight applied to being predetermined independently for each group;

 calculating an overall scores for said individuals using said scored global variables, said calculations using the weighted value of any variables when available; and

 selecting individuals responsive to said calculated overall scores.

- 20 83. A method for comparing the accuracy of predicted success estimates for individuals using cognitive variables and non-cognitive variables, said method comprising:

 collecting cognitive data and non-cognitive data for a plurality of individuals;

25 calculating a first predicted success indicator for each of said plurality of individuals using corresponding said cognitive data;

 calculating a second predicted success indicator for each of said plurality of individuals using corresponding said non-cognitive data;

 collecting performance data for said plurality of individuals;

analyzing said performance data for each of said plurality of individuals to produce a measure of actual success; and

comparing said measure of actual success with said first predicted success indicator and said second predicted success indicator to determine which of said variables produced a more accurate predictor of future performance.

84. A method for comparing accuracy of predicted success of individuals using cognitive variables and non-cognitive variables, said method comprising:

collecting cognitive data and non-cognitive data for a plurality of individuals;
calculating a first predicted success indicator for each of said plurality of individuals using corresponding said cognitive data;

ranking said plurality of individuals using said first predicted success indicators;

calculating a second predicted success indicator for each of said plurality of individuals using corresponding said non-cognitive data;

ranking said plurality of individuals using said second predicted success indicators;

collecting performance data for said plurality of individuals;
analyzing said performance data for each of said plurality of individuals to produce a measure of actual success;

ranking said plurality of individuals using said measures of actual performance;

comparing said ranking using said measures of actual success with said ranking using said first predicted success indicator and said ranking using said second predicted success indicator; and

determining the relative accuracies of said cognitive variables and said non-cognitive variables in predicting actual performance from said comparison.

85. A method as in one of claims 83-84, wherein said non-cognitive variables are determined through the submission, for each individual, of a form filled out by the individual, an academic recommendation form filled out by someone associated with

an educational institution at which the individual has attended, and a recommendation form filled out by someone with personal and community knowledge of the individual.

5 86. A method as in one of claims 83-84, wherein said non-cognitive variables include positive self concept, realistic self appraisal, understanding of social and organizational systems, ability to complete long-term goals over short-term activities, leadership experience, community service, self-motivated acquisition of knowledge or skills, availability of support person.

10 87. A method as in one of claims 83-84, wherein said actual performance data includes a college GPA.

88. A method as in one of claims 83-84, wherein said actual performance data includes a job salary.

15 89. A method as in one of claims 83-84, wherein said actual performance data includes at least one of a measure of how often promotions are received and a measure of the average length of time per employer.

90. A method as in one of claims 83-84, wherein said actual performance data includes at least one of a measure of business leadership and a measure of community standing.